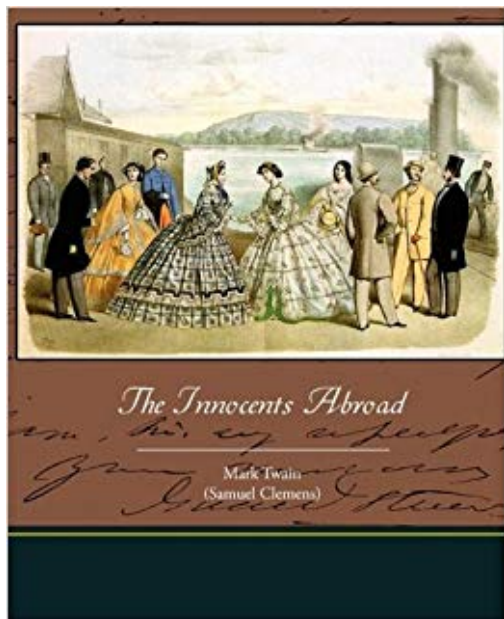


The Innocents Abroad *by* Mark Twain



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Mark Twain is best known for his novels and short stories. Twain uses his incredible wit to depict life in America. His books Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn have been read by school children for generations. His life on the Mississippi River has peeked the imagination of boys to go and build a raft and sail off into unknown adventures. From the original dust jacket, "The Innocents Abroad of 1869 and Roughing It of 1872 ... remain today among the most popular travel books ever written. The Innocents Abroad, based largely on letters written for New York and San Francisco newspapers, narrates the progress of the first American organized tour of Europe, to Naples, Smyrna, Constantinople, and Palestine.... Roughing It is the light-hearted account of Mark Twain's actual and imagined adventures when he escaped the Civil War and joined his brother, recently appointed Secretary of the Nevada Territory. His accounts of stagecoach travel, Indians, Western dress and food, and customs, frontier society ... are intermingled with his own experiences as a prospector, miner, journalist, boon companion and lecturer as he traveled through Nevada, Utah, California and even to the Hawaiian Islands."



Reviews of the **The Innocents Abroad** by Mark Twain

Ginaun

"Mark Twain Innocents Abroad; Illustrated & Enhanced Collectors' Edition" from ReAnimus Press (call it the IEC edition) is the most disappointing book that I have ever obtained from Amazon. The terms "Illustrated", "Enhanced" and "Collectors'" promise a wonderful example of bookmaking. The Book Description says that it has been "enhanced to include.....all the original 234 beautiful, humorous, and indispensable illustrations--not found in other editions....."

Reality is otherwise. All 234 illustrations are there. But the original editions of Twain's works had excellent, clever engravings with clear, crisp black lines on white background, and this quality is preserved in many facsimile editions today. In this IEC edition the illustrations are all apparently photocopied in faint grey line on a lighter grey background, and look like like landscapes seen through a fog. This, and the fact that the illustrations have been reduced to something like 50% of their original size, totally destroys the charm and impact that the pictures were meant to convey. In an act of desperation, I printed out half a dozen illustrations from the internet site of the Twain Library of Virginia, and pasted them into the book opposite their printed facsimiles. The contrast is appalling!

This IEC edition is not a facsimile of the original issue. The book has been re-typeset in a miniscule type font, as small as that used in the little 4 ¼" x 7" Signet Classic paperback of "Innocents Abroad"! There are occasional disturbing eccentricities, such as in Chapter 26, where an in-text playbill for the Roman Colosseum is suddenly expanded into four pages of empty space and gigantic type, larger than on the Title Page or anywhere else in the book. Other strange eccentricities of typesetting make this look like a book put together by students or amateurs.

To be fair, the one truly original feature of the IEC edition is a three-page Appendix I describing the "Quaker City", the paddle-wheel steamboat that took Twain and his companions on their five-month Odyssey. The five illustrations of it when a passenger ship and when a U.S. Navy warship, are fascinating. Appendix I is the only thing that I will save when I discard this edition.

If you want an edition of "Innocents Abroad" with good reproductions of all the original illustrations, then I suggest that you consider the Oxford Mark Twain edition, available in both hardback and paperback. I just received a copy from Amazon, and am immensely pleased. The illustrations are full-sized, clear and crisp. Oxford Press knows what it is doing.

Ger

This edition was very strange. It was big and heavy and the pagination was off. It looked like it had been run off on someone's home printer. If you want a copy of this classic by Mark Twain for your permanent library, I would suggest paying more for a better book. That being said, it was an interesting, if at times a bit tedious, work by Twain. It is fascinating to see the world through the eyes of a good writer in a different time. Twain shows the prejudices of the era but but his innate compassion still shows through.

Opimath

Sponsored by his publishers in 1867, Mark Twain takes a six month land/sea tour of the Mediterranean, the Black Sea and the Holy Land. The result is this informative and satirical account of the trip that covers France, Italy, the Crimea, the Holy Land, Egypt and other notable points along the way. The local "Chambers of Commerce" and the Catholic Church were probably not amused, but this reader absolutely was. From my limited experience, not a lot has changed over the ensuing 150 years.

My only complaint was that Twain's 1860's writing style takes some getting used to and makes the book read slower than it should. (Otherwise though, I guess it wouldn't be Mark Twain) Also, the Kindle version had no illustrations/photos which I gather were plentiful in the print version.

But if you like history, travel and a dose of irreverence, this is for you. Wonderful!!!

Flamehammer

I enjoy reading Mark Twain, and I especially enjoyed this book. It is Twain at his sarcastic and witty best; however, this book was written when he was still a relatively young writer and the barbs are sometimes a bit overboard, and the writing a bit loose. Nevertheless, it remains a delightful book to read, a discourse on the mid-nineteenth century American abroad, as well as a cutting commentary on his souvenir-stealing, "Ugly American" tourist companions. Indeed an often scathing commentary on the countries he visited as well as the ridiculous antics of the tourists he traveled with. Not his best book, but still an entertaining must-read.

Ariurin

It is a brilliant and hilarious travel memoir. Twain is, perhaps, America's greatest humorist. I'll knock off a star for "period appropriate" racism. Twain was quite enlightened for his 19th century epoch, but it is difficult to get by his horrifying attitude towards native Americans. It's easy to say "it was the time," but I doubt native attitudes towards such racism has changed much from then to now. But I think we should still read works like this and just deal honestly with the content and try to use it to examine ourselves today. I doubt every attitude we have and write today will look good in 125 years...

Beabandis

The Innocents Abroad is one of the great works of parody of the 19th Century, as well as a thoroughly modern comedic work. Backed by a newspaper, a relatively young (32) Twain joined one of the "Tours of the Holy Land" that were popular with the newly emergent middle class, and sent back regular reports to his paper that, on the surface, read like a typical travelogue. But Twain's acid pen and eye for hypocrisy and cant were in full force, as was his ability to parody subjects in a sly and clever manner.

Even though this book is over 130 years old, Twain's satiric style comes across as very modern. Fans of Jon Stewart would find a very similar sensibility in Twain observations. I first read this book as a teenager, forty years ago, and I still find passages that make me laugh out loud.

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